# Adding Holes?

Holy Cow! VisualFoundation 2.0 is wholly useful!

We do not often stick holes in our products, but we've taken something out of the mat slab in VisualFoundation 2.0 (now available!) to make it more useful. By allowing holes in the mat, this already powerful tool has gone from being a nice option in your toolbox to an **essential appliance**. You can now solve all kinds of real-world foundation problems, like this one:

[**click** the image for a better view]
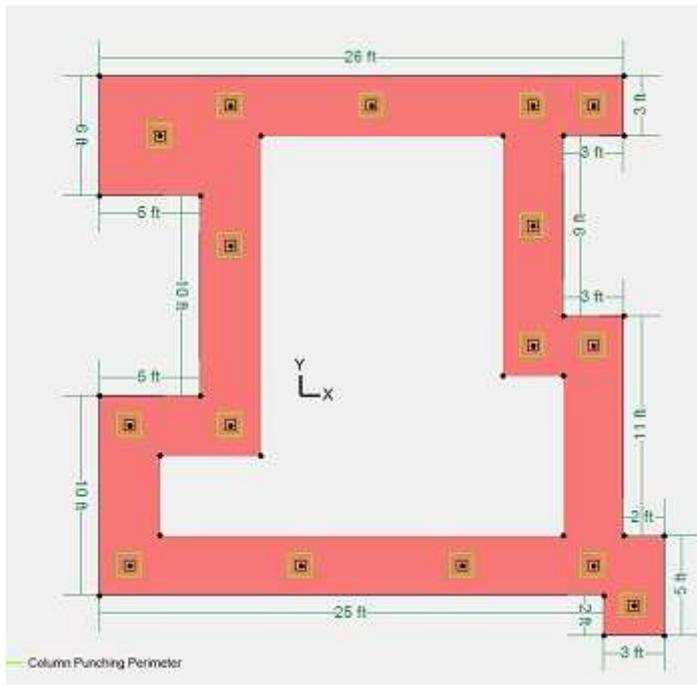
We didn't stop there, though. This hot new product has gone from "lab experiment" in 2008 to a field-tested, engineer approved product in 2010. And that transition will make all the difference for the foundation work you need to do. Check out this short-list of other enhancements:

New Features

- **Multiple slab** areas (thickness / soil properties)
- Improved **DXF** handling
- Blazingly **fast** Delaunay meshing
- Easier **rebar-pattern** definition
- **Wall loads** may be distributed or total
- Grade beams and walls are **more accurate**
- **Reports** are more concise and complete
- VisualFounadtion 2.0 is easier to **use**

If you have not used VisualFoundation yet, be sure to give it a whirl for your next combined footing or slab-on-grade project. Get a free trial now. You may order VisualFoundation 2.0 today.

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Window Washing

Terry's Favorite Cleanup Tools for Windows

I live in a cyber-world filled with problems. It's my job at least a couple hours a

day, but it seems to follow me home at night as well. It is almost comical that of the 10-hours per week I spend on my home computer, 10% of the time is "installing updates". We are stuck using systems that are overly complex and prone to breaking and attack.

On top of that, just about every piece of software you use wants to install garbage utilities (a.k.a. crapware) or even worse "agents" or task-tray programs. The analogy here is using your Porsche to haul your motorhome around. These mostly useless utilities often draw system resources that might be better spent elsewhere, like in VisualAnalysis or converting a 7.5 GB video file to a different format.

Perhaps things will get better, but until they do here are two tools you might want to master, so that your machine does not master you!

MSConfig

This microsoft utility is installed with Windows (all versions), but there is no fancy menu or icon for it. You must get at it using Start | Run... "**msconfig**", or by tracking down the msconfig.exe file and making your own shortcut. This tool is useful for monitoring who and what is running at startup, and quickly controlling or experimenting with a cleaner, lighter startup as it allows you to suppress the launching of startup programs and services. If you are not sure if you need some installed "feature" or not, you can easily experiment with this tool. You'll find that you can remove almost all of the garbage and your machine will boot faster and function more efficiently.

The drawback of this tool is that it is designed for "testing" different startup options only. To really take charge and clean out your system, you can download CCleaner.

CCleaner

This freeware program serves a number of useful purposes:

- Cleaning out temp. files (Lots of control)
- Cleaning out Registry 'leftovers'
- Managing Installed Programs
- Managing Browser 'Cookies'
- Working with Startup Items

For years, I used this tool as my only "defense" against virus and spyware invasions (we now use the free Microsoft Security Essentials). This program provides nice ways to understand and control what is running on your system, and to get rid of things that are 'leftover' or undesireable. Just by monitoring the list of startup items you can often understand why your system performance has degraded. It is not as thorough or comprehensive as the Autoruns program (free) at Windows Sysinternals, but is much easier to use.

The Registry Integrity checks seem to be very reliable--I have never had a problem anyway--and create a backup of any items removed. This feature helps you get rid of stuff left-over from uninstalled software.

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Web Training!

Virtual classrooms at IES

While most IES customers do not need any training or technical support to use our products, we also know that others could really benefit from training classes. Either for mastering more complex features or for working more efficiently with our products. Learning in a classroom environment is often much faster and easier than trying to read a help file.

Web Training = Big Savings

It is no surprise that a webinar is significantly easier and more economical for everybody involved with no travel requirements or family hardships. So IES is launching a series of web-based training classes on VisualAnalysis that you can either sit in "live" or watch "recorded", depending on your schedule and need to interact with the presenter. At just $100 per 90-minute session, the training classes could be just what you need to really **start leveraging IES tools to their maximum potential**. You can also pickup professional development hour credits (for most states).

VA 7.0 Jump Start Training

We already held one session for VisualAnalysis 7.0 in March that is available now as a recorded session. This was an overview and introduction to the new features, and was well received by the 30 attendees. A **preview** of this session is available at the IES Training page. You can purchase the 90 minute session using our online order form.

Scheduled Web Training
- April 20: VA Reporting

More Information:
www.iesweb.com/training

Meet Keith

Our new Marketing Director

At IES we believe that the best way to support you is to eliminate the middle man. That is why when you contact IES with support questions or suggestions you get an answer from the engineers writing the software. In order to offer even better support and focus more of our efforts on writing tools that will help you get your jobs done, we have added a new member to our team. This will also help us better communicate with current and future customers. We believe our products are underutilized in the market because, as engineers, we simply do not understand how to 'tout' them and are even slightly embarrassed by the prospect.

This is where **Keith Aldrich** will help. By helping our developers understand our customers and by communicating our product abilities more clearly to the world, we hope to extend our services to every engineer who might benefit. This in turn will keep product costs down and focus our developers and engineers on what they do best--delivering quality tools and support.

Please Welcome Keith

If you would like to help Keith get off to a good start, you could drop him an email to tell him why you love (or hate?) to use IES products, his email is **keitha_at_iesweb.com**. You should also take a few minutes to respond to our quick customer survey, see below.

Customer Survey

Learning about You

IES serves a diverse and dynamic population of engineers, architects, contractors, and others. Understanding our community starts with understanding your firm and the kinds of work you do. Please take two or three minutes to respond to our **2010 Customer Survey** [The survey is now completed], as this will help us focus our energy on projects and features you need most.

There is a small surprise at the end of the survey to express our appreciation for your time.

Please take the **Customer Survey**! (Please also pass this on to other engineers in your office who use our tools.)

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